

A Study to Assess the Knowledge Regarding Cervical Cancer among Women in Selected Community Setting, Chennai

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ABSTRACT

Cervical cancer is a potentially preventable disease if appropriate screening and prophylactic strategies are employed. However, lack of knowledge and awareness can result in underutilization of the preventive strategies. Healthcare professionals with adequate knowledge play a huge role in influencing the beliefs and practices of the general public in a positive way. The aim of the study was to assess the knowledge regarding Cervical Cancer among Women. An exploratory survey was conducted and a convenient sampling technique was used to select 30 samples. Structured questionnaire was used to collect the data from 30 women in the age group of 21 to 59 years and the data was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. The study findings revealed that 26(86.7%) of the women had inadequate knowledge regarding cervical cancer and 4(13.3%) of them had moderate knowledge and none of the samples have adequate knowledge regarding cervical cancer and there is a association between level of knowledge regarding cervical cancer with educational status and there is no association of level of knowledge regarding cervical cancer with demographic variables such as age, type of family and occupational status at $p < 0.5$ level.

KEYWORDS: Preventive Strategies, Screening, Knowledge etc

INTRODUCTION

Cervical cancer continues to be a leading cancer among women in India. Despite availability of various screening techniques, majority of Indian women remain unscreened for cancer cervix. The increasing incidence could be attributed to the lack of awareness regarding cervical cancer screening and paucity of organized screening facilities in the country. Cervical cancer is almost always caused by Human Papillomavirus (HPV) infection. Cervical cancer is malignant neoplasm of the cervix uteri or cervical area. It may present with vaginal bleeding but symptoms may be absent until the cancer is in its advanced stages (WHO/ICO Information Centre on HPV and Cervical Cancer, 2009). Treatment consists of surgery (including local excision) in early stages, and chemotherapy and radiotherapy in advanced stages of the disease. Pap smear screening can identify potentially precancerous changes. Treatment of high-grade changes can prevent the development of cancer. In developed countries, the widespread use of cervical screening programs has reduced the incidence of invasive cervical cancer by 50% or more (American Cancer Society, 2009:10). Human Papilloma Virus (HPV) infection is a necessary factor in the development of nearly all cases of cervical cancer. Cervical cancer is a typically slow-growing cancer that may not have symptoms but can be early diagnosed by doing a Pap smear. The burden of disease due to transmissible diseases such as HIV and Human Papilloma Virus (HPV) is increasing especially in developing countries. Research has shown that HPV is the cause of about 70% of all cervical cancers (WHO/ICO, 2010). Leroy, Ladner, De Clercq, Meheus,

Nyiraziraje, Karita and Dabis (1999:104), and Tate and Anderson (2002:881) have shown a statistical significant relationship between HIV, HPV and cervical abnormalities. According to the World Health Organization (WHO) Information Centre on HPV and Cervical Cancer, 2009 report, cervical cancer is currently the primary cancer in women in South Africa with an annual new case incidence of 6 742, in African women. It is estimated that the annual number of new cases worldwide, is as high as 493 243. Deaths due to cervical cancer amount to 273 505 women worldwide and 3 681 in South Africa (WHO/ICO Information Centre on HPV and Cervical Cancer, 2009). Hence, this study aimed to assess the level of knowledge about cervical cancer among women.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

A Study to assess the Knowledge regarding Cervical Cancer among Women in Selected Community Setting, Chennai.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To assess the level of knowledge regarding cervical cancer among Women in Selected Community Setting.
2. To associate the level of knowledge regarding cervical cancer with Selected demographic variables
3. To create awareness on knowledge and prevention of cervical cancer among Women

HYPOTHESIS

- **H₁**– There is a significant association between level of knowledge regarding cervical cancer with selected demographic variables.

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Methodology

An exploratory survey was conducted. Thirty samples in the age group of 21 to 59 years residing at Kotturpuram Urban slum Community area were selected as samples using convenient sampling technique. A self report was obtained and a structured questionnaire was used to collect data.

Ethical considerations

- Ethical committee approval was obtained
- Informed consent was obtained from study participants in language known to them after explaining the purpose of the study.
- Confidentiality was maintained

Results and Discussion**SECTION - A****FREQUENCY AND PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF WOMEN BASED ON THEIR DEMOGRAPHIC DATA**

Majority of the samples 12(40%) of women were in the age group of 40-50 years, 17(57%) of the women were belonged to Hindu, 20(67%) of women were married, 13(43%) of women were married at the age of 23 – 27 years, 17(57%) of the women were belonged to joint family, 14(47%) of the women had primary education, 14(47%) of them were unemployed, 14(47%) of the women had monthly income of above Rs. 10,000/- and 11(36%) of them were aware of information through television.

SECTION - B**FREQUENCY AND PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF WOMEN BASED ON THEIR OVERALL LEVEL OF KNOWLEDGE REGARDING CERVICAL CANCER**

| S NO | LEVEL OF KNOWLEDGE | F | % |
|------|---------------------|----|------|
| 1. | Adequate | 0 | 0 |
| 2. | Moderately adequate | 26 | 87 |
| 3. | Inadequate | 4 | 13.3 |

Table 1 shows that 26(86.7%) of the women had inadequate knowledge regarding cervical cancer and 4(13.3%) of them had moderate knowledge and none of the samples have adequate knowledge regarding cervical cancer

The study was supported by M.Jyothi Suchitra et al., 2017 conducted a study on Knowledge, attitude, and practice toward cervical cancer among women and the study findings shows that more than half of the percentage of respondents are having knowledge about cervical cancer, screening, and preventive measures.

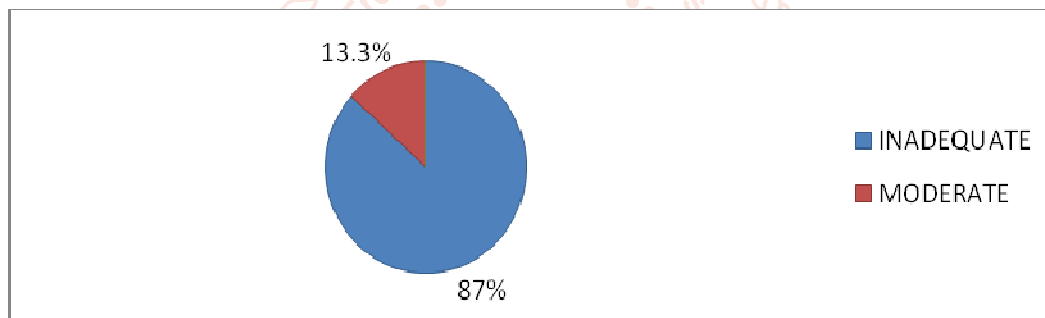


Fig No. 1: Percentage distribution of overall level of knowledge regarding cervical cancer among women

SECTION -C**ASSOCIATION OF LEVEL OF KNOWLEDGE REGARDING CERVICAL CANCER WITH SELECTED DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES n=30**

| S. No. | Demographic Variables | Inadequate | Moderate | Adequate | Chi - square |
|--------|------------------------|------------|----------|----------|-------------------------------|
| 1 | Age of women | | | | $X^2=4.65$ $p=0.100$ |
| | a) 21-30 years | 8 | 0 | 0 | |
| | b) 31-40 years | 0 | 0 | 0 | |
| | c) 41-50 years | 8 | 4 | 0 | |
| | d) 51 -59 years | 10 | 0 | 0 | |
| 2 | Type of family | | | | $X^2 = 0$ $p = 0.500$ |
| | a) Joint | 12 | 2 | 0 | |
| | b) Nuclear | 14 | 2 | 0 | |
| 3 | Educational status | | | | $X^2=6.8$ $p = 0.035^{**}$ |
| | a) Primary education | 8 | 3 | 0 | |
| | b) Secondary education | 6 | 1 | 0 | |
| | c) Graduation | 12 | 0 | 0 | |
| 4 | Occupational status | | | | $X^2=1.1$ $p = 0.500$ |
| | a) Coolie | 8 | 1 | 0 | |
| | b) Private sector | 9 | 1 | 0 | |
| | c) Unemployed | 9 | 2 | 0 | |

* $p < 0.5$, S=Significant, N.S= Non-Significant

Table 2 shows that there is a association between level of knowledge regarding cervical cancer with educational status and there is no association of level of knowledge regarding cervical cancer with demographic variables such as age, type of family and occupational status at $p < 0.5$ level.

The study findings was supported by G. Narayanan et al., 2017 conducted a study on Knowledge, attitude, and practice toward cervical cancer among women and the study findings shows that there was a significant association between sociodemographic characteristics with adequate knowledge, positive attitude, and regular practice toward cervical cancer. We found that adequate knowledge and positive attitude were associated with seven sociodemographic characteristics: age, residing area, marital status, parity, level of education, occupation, and monthly income at $p=0.003$ level of significance.

Nursing implication:

- Nurses can create awareness regarding preventive measures of cervical cancer
- Nurses can motivate women to undergo screening test (Pap smear) for cervical cancer for early detection and treatment and prevention of cervical cancer.
- The nurse researcher can develop new strategies to impart knowledge regarding cervical cancer among women
- Nurse educator can prepare informative health education modules on prevention of cervical cancer to create awareness to the women.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. A comparative study can be conducted to assess the knowledge on pap smear test HPV among urban and rural women.
2. An exploratory study can be conducted regarding social and psychological impact of HPV in cervical cancer screening among women
3. A study can be done to assess the knowledge, attitude and practice on prevention of cervical cancer among women
4. A study can be done to assess the effectiveness of structured teaching program on prevention of cervical cancer among women.

Conflict of interest: The authors have no conflict of interest to declare

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Conclusion

This study found that the overall knowledge regarding cervical cancer among women was low. Lack of awareness of cervical cancer and knowledge of cervical cancer screening services and related care. Healthcare providers should be proactive in promoting women's health and preventing disease. Hence, there is a need for well-organized cancer education programs to create awareness and to eliminate misconceptions regarding prevention of cervical cancer.

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